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Church Union News and Views

Organ of the Continuation Committee

of the

South India Joint Committee on Union

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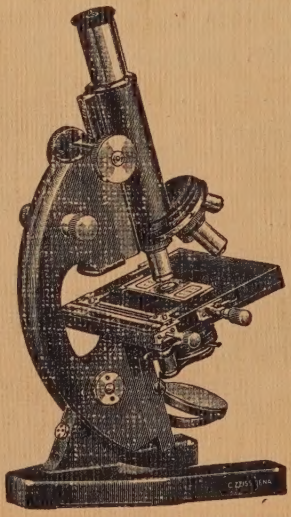

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CHURCH UNION

News and Views

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Editorials

Conference between North and South India

Correspondence is taking place, looking forward to a formal conference on Church Union between representatives of the North India Committee and the South India Committee. Final questions of date, place and personnel have not yet been settled, but the principle had been agreed upon and the details are soon to be settled.

The suggestion for such a meeting was made by the North India Round Table Conference on Union in November, 1930, when it was voted to 'request the South India Joint Committee to consider the proposal that there shall be a Conference in which representatives of both South India and North India may consider together the principles that should be adopted in the formation of a united Church for India'.

That such a conference is necessary goes without saying. No one in South India has ever thought that the union that was there being thought of was a union for South India only. From the beginning, an all-India

union was visualized. It was only because of the comparative simplicity of the problem in South India that the discussions were limited to that area only. It was always anticipated that sooner or later an all-India Scheme would have to be undertaken.

But what is the problem? If there is to be any hope of success in such a conference, there must first of all be a square facing of the facts as they exist to-day, and with that there must be an honest attempt to understand the brother's thoughts and difficulties.

The problem, for the present, involves a union of those Churches that declared their independence of Rome in the sixteenth century. We need not go beyond that group now. In fact, we cannot include all in that group at present since such bodies as the Lutherans and some Baptists are not ready to discuss union. The present negotiations in North India do now, however, include a wide range of diversity and the problem is most intriguing, for Quakers and Anglicans, British Baptists and American Methodists, Wesleyans and Brethren, as well as the United Church of North India are in the negotiations.

How can these unite? Only by meeting at the foot of the Cross. No argument from Scripture even; certainly no argument based on history; no claim to priority in polity, doctrine, or practice is going to bring unity. It will be only as we try to follow Christ closely that we will find ourselves drawn closely together. It will not be *gnana-marga* nor *kriya marga* that will unite us. It is only through *bhakti* that we will come together.

We must also know each other's position. There is not much use in talking if all the time in the backs of our minds there are misconceptions and misunderstandings. All fences must go down and we must frankly and fearlessly try to understand each other. We must not argue a case, we must seek a solution. Being equally intelligent, well-informed, honest, sincere, and devoted, we must really help each other to higher ground where the mists have lifted and where the sun is bright. Not on the lower levels of earthly differences but on the higher levels of spiritual love, will we meet our Lord and Saviour, and in His presence we can become one.

Comprehensiveness

We were on the point of writing a leader on this subject when the following paragraph in an article by Francis Underhill in *The Church Times* of May 29, 1931, came to our attention:—

> I may perhaps be allowed finally to sum up the reasons why many Anglo-Catholics have joined the Westminster Group, in the form of an answer to two other questions often put to me as a

typical person who happens to have been publicly associated with the Group.

The first may be stated thus: 'What are you, as an Anglo-Catholic, doing in the company of persons who disagree with you on certain matters of importance?' To which I answer boldly that, fifteen years ago, I came for the first time into close touch with leaders of other sections of the Church of England than that to which I belong. Without sacrificing any essential convictions, I found among these men and women an enlargement of spirit and a delightful friendship which made that period an epoch in my life. The friendships then formed were no superficial ones, based on sacrifices of principle, but were founded on community of faith, prayer and worship. So long as I live, I intend to act with these people in seeking the good of the Church. The Westminster Group has provided a means of carrying on our association, which has, we believe, already been used by the Holy Spirit.

Nothing less than this is expected from all members of the Church in South India after union. The Proposed Scheme definitely contemplates a great variety of views in the Church after union, but it does ask from every member in the Church that he shall not merely tolerate those who may differ from him, but that he shall regard them as his Christian brethren.

It is probably true that many will have difficulty in rising to this height of Christian brotherhood. It is not easy for any of us to realize that love is the supreme principle of the Kingdom. We much prefer to put the emphasis on faith. We have such a keen sense of our intellectual greatness that we are absolutely convinced that when we have made up our minds that a particular doctrine is true, we are ready to lay down our lives for its maintenance, little realizing what God must think of our puny efforts at thinking, and of our complete failure to realize His supreme quality—Love. 'God is Love' we are told, but we don't believe it. Intellect is supreme, and any conclusion come to within the narrow limits of our ancestral or parochial walls, is vital. Intellect satisfies our ambitions and flatters our pride, while love calls for humility and sacrifice. For intellectual principles we can fight; for love we must work and suffer. That is much harder. We naturally prefer to stand up for principles rather than suffer through love.

But the united Church holds out the higher ideal. It is to be a *Comprehensive Church* and all within its fold are to be animated by love for all the brethren. Oh, yes, we'll differ in thought and in practice, but will try to follow the Apostolic injunction—In love of the brethren, be tenderly affectioned one to another; in honour preferring one another.

Articles

The Search for 'All the Truth'

By The BISHOP OF MADRAS

We have the promise of Christ that His Spirit shall guide us into all the Truth. And in considering a scheme of Church Union, that guidance is more necessary than is anything else. It may seem presumptuous even to hope that any scheme could comprise all the Truth: but we have the promise of Christ and we would not be so faithless as to say that it cannot be fulfilled.

EPISCOPAL, PRESBYTERIAN, CONGREGATIONAL.

The three Churches considering Union have behind them three lines of organization: and each one has expressed from time to time the fear that their particular contribution has not received proper weight in the proposals which have been put forth. To compare claims and give a little more here and a little less there, is probably not the best way of effecting a stable union.

It is perhaps better to examine once more the eternal truths which are revealed in the Scriptures concerning God's purposes and to consider them in the light of the experience of the Church, in trying to follow the leading of the Spirit of God. Most separations of Christians have been caused by over-emphasis or perversion of some one truth: and that has produced a reaction to a complementary truth, which has in its turn too often been similarly exaggerated.

But there must be some fundamental principles underlying the idea of the Church: and any examination of a scheme of Church Union must start from them. We go back therefore to the New Testament and try to discover the principles.

I. THE CHURCH IS DIVINE.

The first thing we have to remember is that the Church is God's creation. It is not merely an association of like-minded people who are drawn together by their common interest in heavenly things.

It is Divine because it is God's own creation.

It is Divine because Christ has chosen it to be His Body.

It is Divine because it is the habitation of the Spirit of God.

It is Divine because it is the representation of God's attributes among men and because it is the instrument of His working. That, we may agree, is the meaning of the truth that it is the Body of Christ. For it is through

the body that the spirit reveals its character and it is through the body that the spirit performs its purposes.

And so Christ could command the disciples to love one another, promising that their love should be a proof to the world that they were His, for God is Love.

And St. Paul could warn his converts against all forms of evil passion, of filthiness, or dishonesty and so on, for God is holy, and God is Love and they are the Body of Christ.

If these things are so, there can be no place in any Church for laxness in morality or for selfishness in life. People of such character are not, in any real sense, members of the Church and if they deliberately choose and persist in such a manner of life, Our Lord, St. Paul, and St. John all teach us that they must be excluded until they repent.

II. CHRIST CALLS HIS MINISTERS IN THE CHURCH.

There is no need to elaborate this, for the New Testament is full of instances. Our Lord called His Apostles and trained them: under the guidance of the Spirit, elders were ordained and entrusted with special duties. And the custom has continued to the present day.

St. Paul tells us that the gifts which Christ gave to the Church after His Ascension were the various ministers in their different spheres. And in another place he tells us how the Spirit fills all the different kinds of workers in the Church.

If the Church is Divine, the workers are of Christ's calling and of the Spirit's inspiring.

III. THE CHURCH IS FOUNDED ON THE REVELATION OF GOD.

The Church is founded on the Revelation of God, given in various ways but chiefly through the Incarnation, Death and Resurrection of Christ.

The Church has received a definite Revelation of God, given when He became Incarnate. Its faith is founded on unalterable facts of history. It cannot change this Revelation or whittle away the fact that God became Man. The Revelation is a sacred deposit which the Church is bound to teach and to hand on unimpaired, as it has received it. The record of the Revelation is contained in the Bible, and the teaching of the Church in every generation has to be tested by the foundation truths recorded in it. But the Revelation is not simply contained in facts which have to be accepted by man's brain. There is the experience of God's Spirit, working in the world, working in the hearts of Christians, working in the life of the Church. And this has to be the guide of the Church and of individual men

and women in trying to live according to God's purpose. Fresh meanings and fresh aspects of the Revelation are constantly being realized as man gains experience in the workings of God: and the Church has in its teaching to take note of these.

IV. THE INCARNATION.

The fact that God became Man has given a meaning to life in this world, which it did not have before.

It has enhanced the value of man, as the recipient and expression of God's Spirit given to man. It has given fresh meaning to the material world, as the sphere in which man lives and as the means which he uses to express the life of God in his own life. Thus, for example, love can be expressed through earthly media: sacrifice is made not only in spiritual things but can be shown in the ready relinquishment of bodily ease and of material comforts and possessions. In short, material things can and should be the means of expressing, in terms of time and space, the eternal relation between God and man and they can be the means of strengthening that relationship in man.

V. THE SACRAMENTS.

And this brings us to the Sacraments. Sacraments have only a vague meaning apart from the Incarnation. But viewed in the light of the Incarnation, they acquire very great importance. It is true that if we believe in God as Creator, all life is, in a general sense, sacramental because it must express our dealings with the world which God has made and through which He has expressed His mind.

But we find in the Bible many particular Sacraments of life enjoined on man, to help him to realize and express the divine life. Thus for instance, the Day of rest is definitely given as a Sacrament of all our time: obedience to parents is enjoined as a Sacrament of the Fatherhood of God: the old sacrifices of the Jews were Sacraments of penitence and communion with God.

And our Lord himself instituted, as we believe, two special Sacraments of the new birth and the sharing of the death of Christ as fundamental means of always keeping in the forefront of our religious life these two vital things.

VI. THE CHURCH IS ONE.

There is no need to elaborate this. There cannot be many Bodies of Christ, inhabited by the one Spirit. And the teaching of the Bible is so clear on this point that there can be no room for argument.

Is a Synthesis possible?

We have now enumerated shortly the fundamental truths on which the Church is founded. It is possible that the exposition of some of them may be challenged in some points, but the general statements will be accepted in some form. Experience has shown that all these sides of the Christian Church can be exaggerated and, by their exaggeration, can be made to contradict other aspects of the truth: or again, they can be materialized and evacuated of their real spiritual meaning, as the Pharisees materialized the law of Moses and so incurred the strong denunciations of Christ. The task of giving due weight to every aspect of the truth is so difficult that many despair of it: and again, some assert that it is not attainable on earth and that it is better for the Church to have its separated departments each expressing what it has received.

The Joint Committee on Union has definitely repudiated both these positions. They hold that the unity of the Church is God's will and is not impossible: and that separation is a sin and an obvious hindrance to the carrying out of God's purposes.

We have then to make, not a weak compromise which fails to express the fulness of all these sides of the Divine life, but a synthesis which shall be according to God's will, and it is with that end in view that the Committee laid down first its general principles.

The principles of the scheme.

Thus the fact of the Revelation of God is first laid down. The Record of that Revelation, given in the Bible, is accepted. The statement of the fundamental facts about God and their realization in the spiritual experience of the lives of Christians, is the third principle.

The two Sacraments which Christ commanded are accepted.

The ministry, which is Christ's gift to the Church, is to be received and used as He has given it.

The Church being God's building is not to be subordinate to any secular Government or any Society outside itself in any way which can impair its spiritual freedom to work out God's purposes.

It is not then concerning these general principles that controversy has arisen to any very serious extent.

Differences of emphasis.

The difficulties which are felt are due to fear, based on unhappy experiences of the past.

There is for instance the fear of priestcraft. That all Christians are priests is stated over and over again in the New Testament. Through Christ all have access to the Father by the one Spirit. This is an undeniable truth. God has not put into the hands of a few selected men the sole power

of approaching Him. Nor has He committed to men the power of excluding or admitting men to eternal life. Nor would, we think, any Church claim that it was so. But undoubtedly the power of the priesthood has, at different periods of the Church's history, been stretched beyond all legitimate bounds, notably at the time before the Reformation. And in reaction against this wrong use of their ministry, there have been and are people who have turned against the idea of a special ministry at all. The Church in South India is not at the moment confronted with this particular difficulty. All the Churches considering Union have a regular ministry: men, who have been called by God are ordained for life service in all these Churches. And, in this ordination, prayer is made that they may receive the gifts of God's Spirit for the work they have to do: nor does any one believe that these prayers are a meaningless form or that they are never answered. It is true that all Christians can pray to God without the intervention of any man. But Christ has given various kinds of ministers to the Church as His Ascension gifts to promote its spiritual life and the Church has ordained them as its representatives and leaders. They are thus in themselves what can be called 'sacramental' men: men who express in themselves a living relation between God and man, and their part is to make that relation effective in their own lives and in the lives of those whom they serve. But if they cease to be thus representative of God and of the Church and claim for themselves powers which are more than those delegated, they are misusing their authority and misrepresenting their calling. Has the experience of the Church shewn that it is impossible for men to work faithfully in their calling and commission? It has shewn in all generations that men do fall from their high calling but it has shewn that the supply of faithful pastors has never failed and, when corruption has been widespread, the Church has again and again returned to the true ministry. Christ has not given us gifts which the frailty of man cannot use.

The ministry.

In framing the constitution, the Committee has given very great attention during ten years to the true character of the ministry. The Church desires that the declaration of God's gifts shall be made on its behalf by representative men with its authority: and that is the teaching of Christ and His Apostles. God forgives the penitent sinner: and the assurance of forgiveness of the penitent is proclaimed publicly and privately by His ministers throughout the whole world. God gives His Spirit to the humble recipient of His grace: and the Spirit of Christ dwells in the Body of Christ: and the ministers of God, set apart by His Church, pray for the gift of the Spirit both generally for all their people and specially at Baptism or at Confirmation or admission to Communicant status. Of themselves they cannot give the gift: still less can they withhold it: but as God's

chosen ministers and as the representatives of His Church, they humbly carry out His commands.

Christ shares His life with all faithful believers. But that life was won through the death on the cross. And all Christians have to bear the cross and share the cross in Christ. That is a universal truth but Christ ordained that it should be continually made explicit in the Sacrament of Holy Communion. And so His ministers, as representatives of His Church, not only preach the cross but preside at the Communion. Of themselves they cannot make an unworthy receiver partaker of Christ nor can they stop the blessing if God wills to give it. The most they can do is humbly to act as ministers of blessing or to warn unrepentant sinners, by word or by act, of the awfulness of sin which itself cuts them off from Communion with Christ. And that they do only as representative ministers, called by God.

The presentation of the revealed truth of God, on which the Church is founded, is the care of the whole Church, which is the witness and keeper of Holy Writ. And the Church does that through its ministers. No one would deny that truth can be and is revealed to all who will receive it. But the teaching of Christ, and of His Apostles and the experience of the Church has made it from the first instruct and set apart teachers (called by God as it believes and as they themselves testify) whose special duty it is to preserve the truth intact. The Church has had to fight many battles with mistaken teachers but it has enshrined the essential truths, which were the subject of controversy, in its creeds. And though these grow old and sometimes express the truth in old world language, the Church keeps them as expressing the essentials of the Faith which it has received. Experience has shewn the unwisdom of making fresh creeds in every generation and the Bible is always there as the touchstone of every fresh statement. And so we keep the creeds as we have received them, as a sufficient basis of union. The faith is not purely intellectual and it is not intended that creeds shall be used as they have been in the past, as a means of persecution. Persecution, apart from its futility, shews a lack of the presence of the Spirit of Christ in the Church. But the teachings of the Faith must be preserved, for it is a sacred deposit which we may not and cannot alter. We may express old truth in a way in which it can be understood in each generation but the foundation stands unalterable. And so to the representative ministers whom God has called, is committed the duty of teaching the truth and warning those who bring in strange doctrines.

Episcopacy.

Lastly, we come to the question of Episcopacy. It is this which has caused most of the fears concerning the scheme of union. The objections

to Episcopacy lie in the extravagant claims which have, from time to time, been made for it and in the perversions of the office which have in the past existed and do still persist in some quarters. In its report on Union, the Lambeth Conference reminded us that there have been feudal Prince-bishops and secular bishops lording it over Christ's flock. And they repudiated these as travesties of the ideal of a bishop. Again the Church of the west for many centuries has had its Bishop of bishops, who with his council of cardinals and his centralized office, has claimed to be the chief representative of Christ's authority in the Church and a ruling Prince among the kings of the earth. That ideal the Conference repudiated quite plainly as a perversion of Christ's purpose for the ministry and also on the practical ground that such centralized authority was not for the good of the Church. The Conference carefully defined what it meant by the historic Episcopate. It is that Episcopate which has existed from very early times in the Church and has discharged the same functions in the Church. Looking into it more closely, we see that the Episcopate is a relationship. It is not an office which can stand apart by itself. A bishop without a diocese has no more standing than (say) a retired General has in the Army. He may be again commissioned for some special work, but he carries no inherent authority apart from his Diocese. He does not derive his authority in his Diocese from any personal right or from any private source, either secular or sacred. As in the case of all God's ministers he is called by God to the work which he is to do: and he is chosen by the Diocese which he is to serve. He has his well-defined duties. He is to be pastor and Father-in-God to the people committed to him and especially to the ministers in his Diocese. But he has no powers other than those which are committed to him at his consecration, and these are laid down in the constitution. His main duties are the testing and ordaining of clergy and the guarding of the teaching of the Church, so that the people may receive, as far as possible, the full revelation of God and false teaching may be counteracted.

He is chosen as a representative head and the more solemn acts of the Church are committed to him as the chief representative and pastor. Thus he ordains the presbyters (with others); he sets apart the deacons; he confirms and, after proper enquiry by the duly constituted courts, he administers the discipline of the Church. His responsibility is a heavy one but it is all duly defined; and apart from the whole Church he has no authority of his own.

That is the ideal set forth in the constitution; and it is the practice of most Episcopal Churches to-day.

If the Church were a purely human association, there would have been little argument about the matter. The convenience of the arrangement is obvious. Argument might have arisen about the advisability of making it a life office but there are obvious advantages in continuity and the

constitution has provisions for securing the retirement of a Bishop for physical or other disability. Again the objection has been urged that the powers are too great. Those who urge this have probably not experience of the great limitations with which the powers of a Bishop are hedged, especially as his authority is only moral; but in any case the powers and duties are definitely defined: and experience shews that infinitely greater powers have, from time to time, been taken by self-constituted leaders without definition and, not infrequently, with considerable detriment to the Church. A constitution can define powers and under it they can be kept within proper limits: no scheme can provide against the autocratic assumption of power by pushing individuals, as the most democratic and unorganized societies in the world have not infrequently shewn.

The Historic Episcopate.

The phrase 'the Historic Episcopate' is one which has caused much heart-burning. True, it is laid down in the constitution that no special interpretation of it shall be required in the United Church. But, we are told, one cannot speak of a thing without having *some* theory. That is true: but there is a world of difference between one's private thoughts and propositions which are required as a condition of membership. What the constitution accepts is the thing, not a theory. Those who object to the theory of Apostolic Succession mean by it the theory of private grace passed on in consecration without any necessary relation to the Church at all. That theory is only a later development which grew up in the Church when divisions and rival ministries had obscured the fact that the ministry is the *ministry of the whole Church.*

That the historic Episcopate does not involve this view of the Apostolic Succession is proved by the fact that a large majority of the Anglican Church members do not hold it, while they do hold to the Historic Episcopate. More than this, the Lambeth Report defines the Historic Episcopate and does not insist on or even mention the disputed theory. That a considerable number of people do hold it, we are not concerned to deny. The fact that all the Bishops at Lambeth encouraged the Anglican Church in India to go on with the negotiations on the suggested basis of not insisting on any theory of Apostolic Succession as a necessary preliminary is surely sufficient proof that it is not universally held or universally required. Indeed, it appears in no formulary of the Church of England. The Ordinal merely states that the three Orders of the Ministry have continued from the beginning in the Church and that the Church of England intends to continue them and to use that form of ministry alone. That in special cases they have departed from it, cannot be used by either side as an argument for or against the general principle.

That the ministry does derive ultimately from Christ through the Apostles and has been carried on through a long succession of Bishops, is a historical fact of which different interpretations can be legitimately given. What cannot be legitimately held is that the ministry is a sort of magic gift which is passed down, as it were, secretly from hand to hand. As the constitution says, the Consecrator is God. And the Church relying on His promise itself chooses men and ordains them to the office through its representative chief minister for the time being. St. Paul uses the metaphor of a building in which stone after stone is laid on the foundation of the Apostles and the Prophets. We dare not claim more for the ministry and we would not claim less. But the stones are placed there by the choice of the Church, when it has satisfied itself of God's call to the individual: and it does give assurance of God's purpose and of His continuing grace to feel that the same method and the same trust in His guidance are being used every time. The Bishop is to rely always on counsel from his fellow ministers: Cyprian, the strongest upholder of the sacredness of the priesthood (the word is his) said 'Let the Bishop do nothing without the presbyters and let the presbyters do nothing without the Bishop'. That is a true exposition of the relationship that should exist. It leaves no room for autocracy, and no opportunity for unauthorized departures from the faith and custom of the Church. We repeat that the Bishop is Bishop only in relation to the Church, and not because of any private personal powers. Apart from theory, the Committee felt that if we were to make progress towards the ideal of Christ, the world-wide union of His Church, the only possible way would be by the continuance of the custom of the Church which has persisted in the greatest number of Churches and accepted the Historic Episcopate as most likely to conduce to that end. Apart from negotiations with other Churches, the institution of the Episcopate has proved to be a great bond of union, in the frequent meetings of Bishops, in the fresh inspiration and wide experience which they bring to one another. In smaller matters inside a Diocese, the Bishop often proves a rallying centre or a mediator when disputes arise. And in India where the age-long tradition of caste and communal strife prevails, a common centre is a vital necessity.

Episcopal, Presbyterian, Congregational.

And so for practical reasons too the Episcopate was advocated. Can the truth the Congregationalist stands for be maintained in an Episcopal Church? The right of every Christian to approach his God and his Saviour without the intervention of man: the common gifts of the Spirit shared by all alike: the value of each individual soul before God: the free exercise of all the gifts, intellectual and spiritual which God has given to man: there is no system on earth which can secure these things without

the working of God's Spirit in the whole body: but we make bold to assert that there is nothing which does violence to these principles in the scheme. Or again the carefully-elaborated Presbyterian system which gives the councils of Presbyters their due place, is vital to this conception of the Church.

Temporary limitations.

There is one more point about which something must be said. The scheme imposes, for conscience sake, some limitations on the full realization of some of the customs of the different Churches. The non-episcopally ordained ministers will not minister the Communion in Churches whose members feel bound to use only their traditional Episcopal ministry, but they will be ministers of the united Church and sit in its councils and exercise their ministry in all other ways. Confirmation which is the rule of the Episcopal Churches, will not be insisted on for Communicants of Churches which have not hitherto used it; and the Church will after union consider its procedure in relation to this. Again, those Churches which have insisted on Confirmation as a preliminary to partaking of the Holy Communion, will, in the United Church, admit all communicants to that sacrament, who have been admitted in the uniting Churches to communicant status. Further, all those who have been accustomed, as members of Churches in fellowship with any of the uniting Churches, to receive Communion in those Churches, will be received in any Church of the united Church. The same principles apply to the ministrations of ministers of the united Church in other Churches and of their ministers in the united Church.

Though there are limitations for conscience sake, there is a very wide extension of fellowship. Naturally, those who are accustomed to the rules of their own Churches feel considerable apprehension concerning these provisions. There is on the one hand real concern because Confirmation is not at once made the universal rule of the Church. About this we would only say this now. Confirmation, the special prayer for the Holy Spirit to be given to each baptized Christian in order that he may live *as a member of Christ's Body* (quite apart from any other gifts of the Spirit which he may receive by God's grace) is *not essentially the admission to Communion status*. It is true that those who are full members of Christ's Body are the natural persons to share the sacrament of Christ's Body. But Confirmation is in some Churches administered at a different time from the admission to Communion and that admission may be made in other ways, apart from and after Confirmation, which is the completion of Baptism and the inauguration of the mature membership of the Body. In considering the action of the Church after union, this point is worthy of note.

On the other hand, many people are deeply grieved at the limitations imposed on the ministry of non-episcopal ministers, both in separation now and after union. They feel that any refusal to accept their ministries is to deny that any spiritual power attaches to them. They point to the admission which is freely made that sacraments administered by their ministers are real means of grace and that God has abundantly blessed their ministrations. All this is at once granted. But the ministry is a representative ministry too; it should be representative of the whole Church. In so far as a ministry is only ordained by a separated body, it falls short of being what it would be, if the Church were one. And so all ministries are defective. It is not only that the ordination may have been by a body of presbyters: it is the commission of the whole Church which is ideally needed. The way of giving that commission has, for many centuries in the whole Church, been through the episcopal ministry, and in the ancient Churches, that way alone has been continued. If we are looking for a union of all Christendom, it seems more likely that it will be attained by the old and well-tried method. The older Churches will not abandon the custom of eighteen hundred years, with a light heart. And there are many who feel that they would be departing from the well-tried and safe method, if they departed from it. This is not to say that they deny the plain evidence that the blessing of God has accompanied other ministrations or that they have not been effective. But they have the experience of history that the greater part of the Church has continued, through centuries of trial and persecution, this form of ordination which very early became universal and they believe that no other method will give such a sure foundation for the ultimate union of the whole Church. And anything which can possibly give the impression that a small company of persons can ordain in the name of the Church from which they are organically separated, is fraught with peril to the cause of union.

They ask others to understand their point of view: or at any rate, to believe that it is not dictated by an arrogant belief that they have a monopoly of Christ's gifts, but solely by a desire to follow God's purpose as they understand it.

HARRY MADRAS.

What Can Be Done?

The decision of the Joint Committee to meet together in the near future to revise the Scheme of Union is a very wise one. It has now before it the modifications suggested by various responsible bodies in England and in India, and these give a sufficiently correct idea of the remaining points of difference. The position that has been reached is a critical, but

by no means a dispiriting one. The great gulf which in some matters appeared to separate the episcopal from the non-episcopal churches has not yet been entirely spanned, but two great segments of the connecting bridge face each other across the gulf, and only the difficult business of dropping in the keystone remains. Here and there the alignment of the two halves may have to be adjusted, and the fitting in of the keystone is bound to be a delicate operation. Nevertheless the general form and construction of the bridge is now clear and only the final details have to be dealt with. That is the business of the Joint Committee now.

At first sight the remaining points of difference seem very formidable. Each Church wants at least one or two items included in the final Scheme which it seems difficult for the other churches to accept, though the S.I.U.C. and the Wesleyans show a remarkable resemblance in their outlook and the difference is not between them but with the Anglicans and themselves. Mr. Sumitra, in the September number of *Church Union* mentions most of these differences, and draws the rather doleful conclusion that they imply that we are moving towards an impasse. But surely the only implication we need of necessity find in them is that we have now drawn near the delicate stage of final negotiations. Much depends now on our capacity for understanding one another and being tolerant of each other's peculiarities. There is no space to deal with all the points at issue, but one or two may be mentioned. The Anglicans want us to admit, says Mr. Sumitra, 'that even an unworthy minister can celebrate a valid sacrament'. By that he evidently fears it to be implied that as long as the sacrament is validly if mechanically, performed it matters nothing with what spirit it is conducted, or whether the minister is a worthy servant of Christ or not. But what the Anglican resolution actually says is that 'the unworthiness of the minister does not hinder the effect of the sacrament'. And surely we, who hold no mechanical ideas as to the transmission of grace, would not deny the reality of communion with his Lord to him who shares devoutly in the Lord's Supper, even though it should prove that he who administered it to him was unworthy? The communion is with the Lord, not with priest or minister. Or again, the S. I. U. C. Assembly sponsored the suggestion that at no future time should the doctrine of Apostolical Succession become the official doctrine of the United Church. But it did not say that those who held that doctrine should not enter into communion with itself. It is quite willing to unite with those who hold the doctrine if they do not attempt to force it upon the Church as a whole. In a similar way the Anglicans, some of whom hold opinions on the ideal ministry which no negotiations can well change, ask that they shall not be compelled to say, as the price of their union with other bodies, that in their view all ministries are of equally *certain* validity. Nor, on the other hand, do they ask us of the Free Churches, to subscribe to the opposite

view. We might, indeed, find difficulty in doing so! Let the two friends walk together, as they wish to do, and we shall see, in twenty years or less, whether they will be anxious to question each other's credentials. It is a clear case of 'solvitur ambulando'. There are other matters of difference, some of them perhaps, of major importance. One is the final authority of the bishops in matters of faith and doctrine. I am very glad to see, in what I take to be an official pronouncement of the Joint Committee, that it proposes to deal with this question, and that it realizes that the present form of the section dealing with the subject needs modification. Since this is apparently admitted the difficulty seems in a fair way to being solved. I also hope that, in spite of the advice given at Lambeth, our Anglican friends will find themselves able to modify the demand that no Churches which have hitherto been accustomed to receive the sacrament from episcopally ordained ministers only should be allowed to accept it at the hands of ministers of the united Church who were not episcopally ordained. That is a matter which should be left to the Churches themselves to decide.[1] This is where a trace of Congregational liberty might well be introduced, to prevent the United Church from being divided too much, even temporarily, into water-tight compartments.

There are many such divergencies still to be dealt with, but they can be overcome in the spirit of faith, courage, tolerance and love. And if any differences remain, might I suggest that inside the United Church rather than outside of it we shall find the proper atmosphere for their settlement.

F. C. WILSON.

What can now be done in South India with reference to Church Union?

A practical question that deserves a practical answer. We should face facts and conditions squarely. Are we not spending too much time trying to find phrases that may lead to outward Union and leave untouched the higher spiritual unity? Some diplomatic rearrangement of phrases might perhaps soon lead to outward union. The interpretation of these phrases would perhaps even more quickly show the futility of verbal agreements of varying meanings. 'Except two agree how can they walk together.'

Take the matter of Creeds. To some in the United Church they would be only a testimony that the Church from ancient times believed in the divinity of Christ. To others they mean all they say and are a testimony to the laity and a test to the clergy. Such widely differing interpretations surely cannot work for the spiritual unity of faith.

[1] Let them choose their own ministers.

But the creeds do not seem to be the main present difficulty. The Episcopacy proposed is of weightier import to all. It is said that the historic episcopate carries with it 'no particular interpretation.' Some of us are convinced that the Scheme forces upon the Church the doctrine of the Apostolic Succession in no uncertain terms. Whatever else may be implied in that doctrine, consecration of bishops by bishops, ordination of presbyters by the bishops and confirmation of members by the bishops form an essential part. 'Where there is no bishop, there is no Church.'

What does the Scheme provide? 'The consecration of bishops shall be performed by bishops.' 'Every ordination of presbyters shall be performed by the bishop and presbyters.' As to membership, What? 'Until the Synod of Church shall frame general rules with regard to full communicant membership' the present practices in the Uniting Churches shall continue. The Scheme already provides that 'a diocesan bishop cannot delegate to his commissary his powers of ordination and confirmation'. The Calcutta meeting of the General Council last February is reported to have 'looked to confirmation becoming, *very soon*, the accepted custom of the whole Church'. And Lambeth has made it clear that episcopally ordained presbyters and confirmed members of the new Church 'will never be disowned.' We who do not come under either of the above groups are not to be welcomed to the love and fellowship or the pulpits and the altars of the Anglican Communion.

The above tell some of us that we of the Free Churches will be some of the temporary inconsistencies and incongruities in the United Church solely because we have not had episcopally communicated to us the grace of God. That is an acted interpretation of Apostolic Succession confirming that where there is no bishop there is no Church.

We must face the fact that the Scheme guarantees a full fledged Episcopate in no uncertain terms.

Does the scheme equally provide guarantees for the contributions of the Free Churches in the New Church? Those are left, it seems to me, very largely to look after themselves after the inauguration of the Union with little or no constitutional guarantee to establish them.

No one can doubt that the Scheme provides for episcopacy in a complete way. The question remains whether the Scheme puts forward the constitutional episcopacy many of the Free Churches expected would be put forward. That a very large number of the Free Churches through their regularly constituted assemblies resolved in effect that 'in the written constitution there should be a clear definition or limitations of the powers of the bishop, including his power of veto' is sufficient answer. Any further deliberations should be conducted from the Committee's own standpoint that even 'the leading features of the whole scheme . . . have not yet been officially

accepted'. The episcopate must be definitely limited and the rich inheritance of the Free Churches maintained.

It seems to me that the Anglican Communion does not contemplate recognizing the ministers and members of the Free Churches. Lambeth has made that clear to me. Will the United Church, thirty years hence, after the temporary period justified by 'Economy', widen its fellowship or narrow it? The united Church would then be a Province of the 'Holy Catholic Church in full communion with the Church of England'. Lambeth has hitherto suspended negotiations for union with another Church, 'in part, the result of difficulties as to communion between the Moravian Church and other (non-episcopal) Churches, and the permission apparently given in the Moravian Church to ministers of other denominations to celebrate the Eucharist in its Churches'. If then the united Church would retain full communion with the Anglican Communion, how can we of the Free Churches look forward to maintaining a living and integral communion with our parent Churches abroad and they with the united Church?

Let the discussions continue so that all may agree that the united Church to be shall be broad enough and comprehensive enough to include both the Anglican and Free Church communions without asking any one of them to forego their convictions or to compromise their liberty in Christ. If this is not possible through corporate Union at this time, let us hope and pray that it will lead us all to recognize that even as we all commune individually and as Churches with Christ so all true believers should commune with each other at the Table of the Lord. And therein lies our present disunity and should be found our highest spiritual unity in Christ. Let us try inter-communion as a MEANS to Union and not simply as its goal.

B. ROTTSCHAEFER.

Are Bishops necessary for the United Church?

The impression has gained ground among some members of the non-Anglican Churches that the Episcopal form of Church government has been adopted in the proposed Church Union Scheme, simply because there was no other way of inducing Anglicans to come into the union. It is therefore to remove this impression and to explain why Bishops are vitally necessary in order to build up a strong United Church in South India that I write.

Who is a Bishop? The word Bishop is derived from a Greek word meaning an 'Over-seer'. A Bishop then is a person who has got the oversight of groups of congregations in a certain area. There are already such over-seers in the South Indian Churches whether they are Anglicans or

non-Anglicans. Generally these over-seers go by the name of Superintending Missionaries. These Superintending Missionaries are practically Bishops only in another name. Therefore it must be remembered that when we adopt the Episcopal form of government for the United Church, we do not create a new institution. We only continue the same form of Church government perhaps under a different name.

It may be asked, why should we not continue the same name and call our Bishops superintending missionaries. The word, 'Missionary' can be properly applied to persons sent from abroad by the Mission Boards at home. But Churches in the mission field cannot hope to be under the tutelage of foreign missionaries and under foreign support for an indefinite period of time. The Superintending Missionaries have been withdrawn from many of the Anglican Churches in South India and they are working practically without any foreign support in money. Other Churches in South India will have to do without missionaries, sooner or later. Therefore while the Churches in the mission field will need the institution of an over-seer, it will not be proper to call him a Superintending Missionary. The only appropriate name for such a functionary will be 'Bishop'.

Some of those who oppose the proposal to have Bishops for the United Church perhaps have no clear idea as to how Bishops will fit in in places where there are already Superintending Missionaries. In some places as in the Diocese of Dornakal many of the Superintending Missionaries will be under the Bishop. In places where there are no Bishops at present, one or more of the Superintending Missionaries will have to be appointed Bishops and the other Superintending Missionaries will be under the Bishops in that area. While the institution of Bishops will continue permanently, missionaries will cease to superintend the Churches, as soon as they become self-supporting and self-propagating.

Let us consider now why Bishops are needed for Churches placed in the same situation as the South Indian Churches are, consisting largely of backward and illiterate classes and living in the midst of non-Christian populations. The history of the early Christian Church shows that the Episcopacy has been one of the bulwarks against the enemies of the Church. The worst enemies of the Church were not those who openly persecuted the Christians, not heretics who openly preached against the accepted tenets of Christianity, but they were the subtle ideas and doctrines derived from paganism which would have been more or less unconsciously adopted by Christians but for the fact that the early Churches were guided and shepherded by Bishops. The history of the Church in the second century of the Christian era shows that the Church of that period would not have survived the onslaught of the various heresies and false doctrines that would have swept the early Church had it not been for the early Bishops. The

lives of some of the Bishops of the second century, Ignatius, Irenæus, Tertullian and Cyprian show what battles they had to fight against the inroads of the non-Christian ideas and doctrines of those days.

The Episcopal institution in the early Church not only guarded the Church from outside influences but also helped to strengthen it internally. The Bishop was the link that connected the various communities of Christian living in different places. It was Episcopacy that preserved the unity of the Church throughout all the troublous periods. A writer on Church history says that the Church was surrounded by competing philosophies and religions in those days and that one of the bonds by which the Church was held together was the ministry of the Church consisting of Bishops and clergymen.

We see from the history of the Church that wherever the churches were situated in the midst of non-Christian peoples, the normal form of Church government was Episcopal. In Malabar the Syrian Church which has an unbroken existence from ancient times was governed by Bishops. In fact all the Eastern Churches were Episcopal. The Churches in Syria and other parts of Asia Minor and Egypt would not have preserved their identity but for the organization and discipline provided by the Episcopal form of government. It is this organization and discipline that helped to preserve the Church against non-Christian influences. That is why we want Episcopal form of Church government for the Indian Churches, because in several respects the various congregations of which the Indian Church is composed hold a position similar to the Churches of the second century, of the Christian era, that followed immediately after the time of the Apostles.

As in those days, Indian Christians now come in contact not only with various philosophies of the Hindu religion but also religious ideas not quite on a line with accepted Christian principles that are openly paraded either in connection with political movements or with social reform activities.

Apart from these outside activities, even among Christians themselves, various theories become current such as modernistic theories, about the Scriptures, theories as to how far Christians should adopt the writings of Hindu saints. Then there is the attitude of Christians towards political movements of the day. There must be somebody to give a correct lead to Christians in these matters. This can be done only by Bishops.

The history of the Church shows that till comparatively recent times Episcopacy has been the normal form of Church government throughout the ages. Even after the Reformation there were always officials of the Church who were only Bishops under other names.

The Congregational and Presbyterian form of Church government were only recently adopted in countries where the whole population was practi-

cally Christian and more or less literate, such as England and America. These forms of Church government were not tried for any sufficient length of time in countries like India where Christians form only a very small fraction of the total population and include a large illiterate and backward section. Judging from the history of the Church, these democratic forms of Church government will not suit congregations situated in the midst of non-Christian and hostile influences.

Viewing the history of the S.I.U.C., for the last twenty-two years of its existence, I venture to say that it would have acquired greater cohesion if it had adopted the Episcopal form of Church government, from the beginning. What result it has achieved is possibly due to the fact that the Church was guided from the beginning by missionaries who as I have stated above are only Bishops under another name. One can easily imagine the condition of the S.I.U.C., if there were no missionaries. It would have been only a group of isolated Churches loosely held together by the General Assembly which would perhaps meet only once a year. This state of things would hardly conduce to the building of a strong Church able not only to withstand adverse influences but to act as an aggressive, militant and evangelistic force.

The institution of Bishops has not been an unmixed blessing in all ages. The spirit of Christ has always guided the Church and Bishops have been men of great piety and endowed with gifts which fitted them to occupy the position of true leaders of the Church. But there have been exceptions. Perhaps in a country situated like England and America where the population is mainly Christian and Churches have no necessity to make a stand against the non-Christian influences or to act as an evangelistic force, the Congregational and Presbyterian forms of Church government would have been more suited than the Episcopal form. But here in India a strong Church can be built only on the basis of Episcopacy.

SECUNDERABAD,
November 11, 1930. D. DANIEL CHELLAPPA.

Church Union—An Imperious Need

If I read the 'Zeit-geist' aright, it is to overcome the barriers of border, birth or belief between man and man. If then, that is the spirit and temper of the time, how dare we, who profess to believe in His name and to be born of His spirit, live separate any longer? The world forces are tending towards peace and goodwill; all the statesmen are striving to their utmost to promote brotherhood of man. But if the individual lacks *the capacity for fellowship*, the efforts to attain world peace will be defeated.

This great sin, the lack of the capacity for fellowship is the most besetting sin of the Christian Church in India. If the most intimate communion and true fellowship is not possible among those who count the Cross of Christ their glory, then have I no faith in the power of the Cross. Just at the present moment, everything seems dark and uncertain and the Scheme of union is severely criticized with a view to wrecking it. Yet there is no need to despair. While there is a growing body of intelligent and young Christians in India, seriously thinking about this question, there is every possibility of union being wrought. The Christians of India might have to secede if the foreigners place many insurmountable obstacles before them! Words of wisdom and counsel to the Indian Church, there have been plenty and unasked too! from men who have worked for nearly fifty years as well as those who have not completed five years yet in India. But if you can convince Garibaldi that he was blindly leading his band of young men to absolute danger and certain disaster, then can you also convince the young Christian of India that his blind, sentimental desire for union will only lead to sacrileges, sects and schisms!

If one were to be guided by the ripe experiences of others, he would never gain any experience of his own nor grow self-repliant or independent. Besides this question concerns primarily the indigenous Church and therefore should be left to the Indian Christians to decide. The Indian Christian is not prepared to die *for* nor—*in* these principles which perpetuate these denominational differences but rather live for and in union of all believers in Christ.

The problem of Church Union is complicated by the fact of the dependence of the Churches on foreign support and control. The voices from afar and the counsels of the representatives of the Missionary Societies on the field preponderate in the Church Councils. To its cost, the indigent, indigenous Indian Church has to reckon with this.

But if union should be and could be accomplished independently of the question of finance, there are two ways open for us: (i) The method of the constitution makers, underlying the Scheme of union, or (ii) the bringing into being an entirely new Church organization, without any reference to the past traditions or Home connections. If the difficulties against the fulfilment or the act of union, by the acceptance even provisionally of the proposed Scheme, are insuperable, then only the latter method is available. The lure of creating a new Church, unorthodox, but not necessarily heterodox, is irresistible. She may perhaps be modelled on the present Syrian Church in India—suited to the genius of the land.

To me the obstacles are not very great and if they are, they must be overcome. Union can be gained only in a spirit of self-surrender and sacrifice, and not in a spirit of barter and bargain. It has been felt by some that 'the Free Churches or non-Anglicans have had to sacrifice many things,

while the Anglicans have not called upon to do so. This is said largely with reference to episcopacy or more correctly, historic episcopacy. While sharing the view of the Congregationalists regarding this most disputed question and accepting their attitude in theory, I cannot help feeling that the idea of a holy order of priesthood as understood by the Jews with a higher order of spiritual overseers of souls—the bishops above them—is an idea that India will readily accept and adopt. So even as an expediency, if nothing else, it must be agreed to. If the acceptance of this will lead to union, why then let us take it. The union will result in the enriching of the spiritual communion of the believers as well as in the enlarging of the circle of Christian fellowship.

I am aware that the historic episcopacy is anything but democratic, for it is not merely an *office*, but an *order* as well. As an office,—a position of leadership to which holy men and scholars can be chosen by the congregations or their representatives, it will be in keeping with a democratic modern Church. As an order, it is a monarchic survival. But even as the English constitution has reconciled the principles of democracy and monarchy, and which while clinging to old forms, traditions and conventions, has broadened and expanded each time from precedent to precedent, so too a truly democratic system of supervision may be set up in the historic episcopacy. But this is a digression from the main subject.

I accept the Scheme as representing the most sincere efforts towards union. The Scheme of Church Union has an element of adventure in it and hence its attraction for me. It will open up vistas of spiritual life whose richness and variety, if unknown, will be infinite. The Scheme of Union is a challenge of faith—the faith that is of deeds and not words.

But I accept the Scheme as a tentative one; nevertheless as indissoluble as the holy matrimonial union! I have called it a tentative one; for like marriage, the process of union only begins when it is entered upon. It may have to be modified in the light of experience—the experience gained in living together in Christ. In the process of developing into a union, some of the safeguards will be found to be superfluous and possibly some of the principles herein preserved might be abandoned.

I must accept the offer of union even to be true to my self; for I feel an inward urge towards it. That way lies the opportunity of enlarging my capacity for fellowship with those that love Him. In those opportunities of worshipping and working, living and dying together lies the way to the consummation of the Church Union. So long as we live apart and speak complacently of our *spiritual* unity, this union is impossible. This union is not of *lips*, but of *Life;* and only by uniting together we shall be achieving unity.

An academic discussion of the basis of union may only sunder us further while a genuine determination to come together in brotherly love

and Christian fellowship will bring about the marvel of Church Union. Then inspired by community of purpose and strength of unity, the Church in India will be able to bear an effective witness for our master. An affirmation of principles or a definition of liturgical terms or a forcible declaration of beliefs may prove the futility of any Scheme of Union, but the ready acceptance of the hand of fellowship, and a strong predisposition in favour of corporate spiritual life will help to achieve the miracle.

There are some that minimize the efforts to bring about Church Union in South India and exhort the Christians 'rather to preach the Word of God'. But if those that proclaim the universal Christ, that profess to love Him and live for Him cannot override the narrow confines of creed or colour or circumstance, then is preaching a mockery and sham! I wil not deprecate the preaching of His word. It is the foremost duty of every Christian. But I shall not refrain from doing all that I can to promote the holy purpose of our Master—the union and communion of all His followers in spirit and in truth. In seeking to preach the Love of God, should we not remove unbrotherliness and thus add potency to the Word of God by practice?

I am tempted to suggest that only a spiritual revival can compass this union. If we hold a mass convention for all Christian people (like the Keswick or Maramanpu) not with a view *to convert* each man to the other's beliefs or point of view or to demand the surrender of doctrinal citadels, but to quicken the spiritual life, and to lead to a live sense of common heritage and universal brotherhood, then and there might be established this new United Church of India, free from dissensions and elements of discord—a Church rooted and grounded in love—a Church dedicated to live and labour in this land with the divine strength and spirit of the United Church of Christ.

November 10, 1930. M. J. SARGUNAM.

The Minister and the Sacraments

Much of the difficulty still felt by both the Parties concerned in the negotiations for Union centre around the Minister and the Sacraments. To the Anglican, if the Minister that celebrates the Communion is not episcopally ordained, it is vitiated, it is defective, it is no Communion. The Communion is to him a mystical means of grace. But to the ministers and members of the South India United Church, it is an act of obedience to a command given by the Master just before His passion and crucifixion. He, no doubt, experiences in the Communion the strengthening of his attachment to his Saviour Jesus Christ, by the realization of the wondrous love which the elements used remind him of,

The thought of the celebrant does not enter into his mind at all. It is too full of more sacred thoughts to allow entrance to such lower and perhaps irrelevant thoughts. While, at the Communion, we thus realized by faith the supreme love of God and of His beloved son, the question of order may cross the minds of Communicants at other times. The question who can rightly celebrate the Communion might by some be sometimes asked. This is answered in different ways as practice demonstrates. In the Anglican Church the celebrant can never be any one other than an episcopally ordained Minister. In the Churches of the S. I. U. C., normally, he is an ordained Minister. Very rarely does an unordained Minister celebrate it. But is not the spiritual benefit obtained by the Communicant the same in all these cases? Hundreds of Communicant members of the S. I. U. C. partake of the Lord's Supper, the celebrating Minister at which is sometimes an episcopally ordained Minister and at other times a non-episcopally ordained Minister, and they are able to perceive no difference whatsoever in the spiritual effect produced. This is the unsophisticated testimony of hundreds, the reality of whose spiritual experience can never be questioned. If it is so, then why should a non-episcopally ordained Minister be debarred from celebrating the Communion, if and where the congregation is composed of those who have been accustomed to the Anglican tradition?

As long as this distinction is kept up, there can be no real union. As the outcome of a real desire of many children of God in South India to remove or minimize the evils of separation and disunion among the Churches established in this part of the country where, of all parts of India, the Gospel of Christ has made more headway, it is possible to show a united Church: but a really united Church it is impossible to produce under existing circumstances. The distinction that is insisted on between episcopally ordained and non-episcopally ordained ministers is something alien to the S. I. U. C. The ministers, far more than the laity, feel that in the united Church they will be considered to be a class of inferiors whose ministrations will not be acceptable to those of the Anglican Communion.

According to Lambeth, until all the Ministers in the United Church are episcopally ordained the unification of the Ministers is not secured. To speak, therefore, of a united Church when the unification of its Ministers is not secured is to indulge in self-contradictory terms. After successive solutions laboriously thought out and put forward to overcome this great barrier, such as reordination, a commissioning service, fifty years of toleration and finally thirty years of grace, we come back to where we were twelve years ago, viz., that it is not possible to put the non-episcopally ordained Indian ministers on a footing of equality with their brethren who happened to be ordained by an Anglican Bishop. The fact that Lambeth has withheld its sanction to general inter-communion has made portions of

the S. I. U. C. pause and consider whether they should enter the Union on these terms, however desirable and necessary union may be. It is felt that a federal union should now become the aim instead of the organic union which has till now been the object of attainment.

Lambeth's attitude towards what is termed Consecration *per saltum* is a definite discouragement to those of the S. I. U. C. who may be competent otherwise to be made Bishops in the near future, should the union be consummated. In its opinion, it is not invalid but undesirable, all the same.

But notwithstanding all that has been said and written emphasizing the difficulties in the way of Union, the fact still remains that there is a very large volume of real, earnest desire in South India for the union of Churches in the area. This genuine desire cannot be easily stifled, its source being divine. Those who have had the honour and privilege of being members of the Joint Committee on Union and have experienced such spiritual exaltation in the meetings as has been experienced nowhere else cannot but feel the deepest depression if the above circumstances create an *impasse*. Those who have witnessed marvellous changes of attitude towards Union in accredited Christian leaders who are possessed of an abundance of driving force are led to hope that the Union is not even humanly impossible. But with God all things are possible. It behoves all servants of God, therefore, to wait on Him day after day until He shows early and unmistakably what steps they should take so that the desired end may be reached. The way has been more or less prepared: much preliminary work has been done: many seemingly immovable obstacles have been removed. If, at this stage, instead of pressing forward in faith we give up all further efforts in despondency, the blame will be upon us.

October 22, 1930. PAUL DANIEL.

Why I did not sign the Manifesto?

MYSORE,
July 16, 1930.

Dear Dr. Banninga,

A few friends have asked why I have not signed the 'Manifesto' *re:* Church Union. I have therefore asked my son to send you for publication in *Church Union News* a copy of my letter to Mr. Jacob of the United Theological College giving my reasons for not acceding to his request.

With kind regards,
Yours sincerely,
J. P. COTELINGAM.

LAKSHMIPURAM,
MYSORE,
May 21, 1930.

Dear Mr. Jacob,

Your letter, dated May 7, together with a copy of the *Manifesto on Church Union* came here re-directed from Bellary.

I regret I cannot see my way to accede to the request of the Committee that drew up the *Manifesto* for the following reasons :—

1. While I am sensible of the fact that Indian Christians, as such, have not as yet expressed their opinion to any appreciable extent, as individuals or as representatives of individual Churches, no attempt should be made, even with the best of motives, to force them to give expression to a form prescribed or suggested. That expression of opinion that is spontaneous is the only one that is, or is likely to be, of any value.

2. As far as I have observed I have not noticed anywhere attempts at a *rapprochement* between Churches of different denominations where there is or ought to be ample scope for expression or demonstration of that strong desire for Church Union.

3. The great mass of non-English knowing individuals, who are members of our various Churches, are ignorant I believe of 'the basic principles of the Scheme of Union in S. India'. It is not enough for Diocesan Councils, Wesleyan Synods and Provincial non-Anglican Councils to declare their views. If the *Manifesto* is to be sent to 'leading Indian Christians in different parts of India' to stir or wake them up what about the rest ?

4. The first five paragraphs of the *Manifesto* deal with the past historical and present divided position of the Church. The last para. with which the *Manifesto* ends, asks 'leading Indian Christians' to accept the Proposed Joint Scheme, 'whether or not perfect', in the absence of any other Scheme. This is not fair.

5. The present serious, nay, ominous political situation is all absorbing. 'Leading Indian Christians' must be feeling obsessed with what is daily happening in the country and be seized with the apprehension of what may have to be faced to-morrow. The issuing of the proposed *Manifesto* at this juncture is I feel not opportune.

The delay in replying to your communication was unavoidable.

Yours sincerely,
(Sd.) J. P. COTELINGAM (*Senior*).

Church Union and the Wesleyan Mission

THE NILGIRIS.

As I understand that others are being asked to deal with the question as it affects the Wesleyan Mission elsewhere, I propose to limit myself to that part of the field in which I am at present working,—the Nilgiris.

(I)

It will be well, first of all, to understand the present position. For some seventy years, the Basel Mission carried on evangelistic work in many parts of the Nilgiris. With the coming of the War, this work had to be abandoned, though, it was hoped, only temporarily. In 1919, with the consent of the Government of Madras, the Wesleyan Mission assumed responsibility. As the years went by, it was found that the Basel Mission were not able to undertake, for financial reasons, anything like the work they did before the War and it has been agreed that we should remain responsible for that part of the Nilgiri Field occupied by them.

At Coonoor, the American Arcot Mission had a large Church, but just before the War they handed this over to the Basel Mission with the result that we in turn took charge.

In Ootacamund, the Wesleyan Mission have been in occupation since 1862.

Further, we hold ourselves responsible in certain areas for the Christians who live on the Estates on these Hills. The majority of these are coolies who come up from the plains for a number of months in the year. They come for the most part from areas occupied by the C.M.S., L.M.S. or our own Society. The pastoral charge of these people while they are on the Nilgiris, is shared by ourselves with the Church Missionary Society and, by agreement with the representatives of the latter, certain estates are considered as part of our field so that there may be no unnecessary overlapping in the oversight of these Christians or in the propagation of the Gospel among the non-Christians who work in these particular areas.

(II)

It will be realized, then, that there were very many different elements which went to make up our work on the Nilgiris. There were differences of doctrine, of Church order, of liturgy, of administration. Americans, Germans and British have been successively responsible. The work is carried on among Badagas and Tamilians in three vernaculars, and in addition, the permanence of our occupation has been all along in question. It will not be out of place, then, if something be said about this local

'Union', before turning to the main question which deals with the possible results of the wider Church Union as proposed in the South India Scheme.

It must be remembered, of course, that the two Unions are not parallel. For one thing, we have been considered to be only in temporary occupation. For another, our assumption of control was due to the force of external circumstances which (it is quite understandable) were not acceptable to all the members of the various Churches, and, consequently, there have been difficulties which should not occur in the functioning of the wider scheme of Union if it be carefully and widely presented to the people so as to win their consent to it.

It will be well to state at the outset a general principle. It has been the aim all along to work through the leaders chosen by the individual Churches. There has been no conscious attempt to force into one mould all the different ingredients. When changes occurred, they arose out of the definite wishes of the people or were due to circumstances beyond the control of anyone. One or two illustrations will serve to bring this out clearly.

(*a*) Liturgy. At Coonoor, in the Church formerly belonging to the Arcot Mission, the Liutrgy of that Mission was in use. But it was found impossible to obtain further copies of it. The suggestion was made in the Elders Meeting that, if a congregation is intelligently to follow a liturgical service, books must be in the hands of the people and that, as no copies of the Arcot Mission Liturgy could be obtained, it would be well to use that of the Wesleyan Mission. The suggestion was not accepted and, for a while, services were conducted with the help of such copies of the Arcot Liturgy as were already possessed by the members. It became more and more difficult, however, to conduct the service with any real co-operation on the part of the congregation, and later it was agreed that the Wesleyan Liturgy should be adopted. This is now, in Kanarese or Tamil, in general use throughout the Churches.

(*b*) It is the custom of the Basel Mission to celebrate Holy Communion once every three months, and though our practice is to observe it every month, no attempt was made to force an alteration from the one that prevailed. But, in course of time, some change has been made, though again only by consent of the Elders. In one Church, when the suggestion was made at the meeting for a more frequent celebration, it was decided to experiment by observing it every two months; in another case, it was felt that it would be wise not to make any change. The present position is that this rite is celebrated in some cases once a month, in others every two or three months.

These illustrations (which could be added to) deal only with worship in the Church. It will be asked whether there have resulted any changes in the wider sphere of the Church's life, due to the combination of the

various elements. This at any rate: it has widened the outlook of the people. Representatives go to the larger Church Courts in Mysore. Teachers, evangelists, Bible-women, in their training, have been brought into touch with Christian institutions so far apart as Madras, Vellore, Tumkur and Pasumalai. Contributions have been given by the people for missionary work outside their area. Generally speaking, it has widened the scope of their thinking and their activities.

(III)

What may be expected if Church Union is achieved?

The C.M.S. and ourselves, among Protestants, are the two Societies chiefly concerned in the work of propagation and the building-up of those Churches which have been established. The C.M.S. has devoted itself mostly to work among the Tamil people, while we have carried on in the three vernaculars, Tamil, Kanarese and Badaga. A point arises here which will have consequences for the future. Kanarese was the language used by the Basel Mission in their services, as being most closely akin to Badaga. But in the schools the main medium of instruction has been Tamil, the Government official Language. This has meant that for the growing generation Tamil is becoming more and more predominant, while Kanarese is assuming a position of less prominence. Badaga has no script and as education spreads more and more amongst the girls, the time will come when Tamil will be common to all. Such unification of language will tend to draw the work of the C.M.S. and ourselves together. If Union comes, then, the advantages will be far reaching.

It will not be necessary, as hitherto, to have separate Churches, one for the Tamil people and one for the Badagas. As occasion arises for the erection of new Churches, they will be able to serve both communities. Schools, by readjustment of supervision, will gain in greater efficiency.

Further, Union will make for better co-ordination in discipline. It is a commonplace with us all that Indian Christians do not hold so deeply to the divisions that are found in the West. On the whole, they find their spiritual home equally with any of the main Protestant Churches, a factor that will stand the united Church in good stead as the years go by. Doctrinal differences do not lie deep. On the Nilgiris we have experienced no difficulty on this ground. But there is another aspect of this which at the present time is detrimental. Members, who consider themselves to be under some grievance, do not hesitate to go from one Church to another whether C.M.S., L.M.S. or Wesleyan or whatever it may be, and the reason given is not on the ground of grievance. Other excuses are made which on the surface are satisfactory. But if Union comes about, greater co-ordination will be achieved in this respect.

One of the main advantages will concern the work on the estates. Some degree of comity has been reached between the C.M.S. and ourselves. Areas have been marked out and allotted for which the one or the other is recognized as responsible. But the boundaries selected have been chosen somewhat arbitrarily. It happens that a person or a family or a number of people seek instruction. The nearest evangelist, it may be, is not, under the general agreement, responsible for the area in which they live. The enquirers know of no 'imaginary line' separating them off. They do not, they cannot, understand why they should be referred to someone else who lives at a greater distance. Again, the coolie population is a 'floating one'. They move from place to place. While it is true that an estate will recruit from a particular area on the plains, there is no guarantee that the Christians among the recruits will always be Wesleyan, or C.M.S., or L.M.S. One year the majority for which a pastor or an evangelist is responsible may be those of his own Church. Another year they may be in the minority. The whole question of comity under such circumstances must be considered, or else the issue is altogether confused. Union, not merely of administration, but recognized by the people themselves, will be of far-reaching advantage in this particular sphere of our common work.

Let me give a definite illustration, from another angle, of the advantages Union will have in work on the estates. I was asked to take, sometime ago, a service to which a number of L.M.S. Christians would attend. I found that they were all of that particular Society. Brought up on congregational principles they had established their own services, though we had a Church on an adjoining estate in easy walking distance. Let me say, at once, that it was more than delightful, it was most encouraging to see the way in which they had banded themselves together. They had obtained permission to use a small building. They had whitewashed it, erected a little pulpit, appointed one of the older men as their leader. A lady on an adjoining estate was conducting sewing meetings for the women. Here was a little band of Christians keeping the lamp of their faith burning under circumstances that were far from encouraging. But they kept themselves to themselves. They felt, for exmaple, that they should not receive communion at our hands. That was not their way. And we, although we offered it, felt the danger without some close spiritual oversight, of admitting them to that most sacred service. But, if Union were achieved, how freely we might have encouraged each other!

And that, ultimately and through all, is one of the *vital* reasons for Union. The psychological and spiritual effect of Union, on the Nilgiris as elsewhere, will be beyond all reckoning. To know that we are one, not merely by co-ordination, or federation or administration, but, as the years go by, increasingly in worship and service, in thought and practice, will be in the way of encouragement to long-established Churches and to isolated

units alike an asset of incalculable value, and that not only to themselves but to those who through them shall enter the Kingdom.

It is true that, even when the form of Union has been obtained, we shall have to grow into the full spirit of it, and that will call for all patience and wisdom. If our experience on the Nilgiris is of value, it is clear that we must not force Union unduly, neither must it be delayed unduly. The people must know that they have a share in it and a responsibility for it. But I am confident that they will respond to it.

The closing words of the Preface to the Anglican Prayer Book may not inappropriately be adapted. . . . . 'And having thus endeavoured to discharge our duties in this weighty affair, as in the sight of God, and to approve our sincerity therein (so far as lay in us) to the consciences of all men, although we know it is impossible (in such variety of apprehensions, humours and interests, as are in the world) to please all . . . yet we have good hope that what is here presented (*in this Scheme of Union*) and with great diligence examined and approved, will be also well accepted and approved by all sober, peaceable and truly conscientious sons of the Church.'

The Proposed Scheme and the Telugu Anglican Area

Since the writer first came out to India twenty-four years ago, the Telugu Anglican area has undergone a happy process of 'growing together'. The Districts in which the C.M.S. Telugu Mission and the S.P.G. Telugu Mission are working, are separated one from the other by the whole extent of the Guntur District in which the Lutheran Church is active. For many years, each Mission lived its own life in a water-tight compartment, scarcely knowing anything about the life, the progress and the problems of the sister mission, nor enjoying any fellowship or intercourse with it. As part of the vast Madras Diocese, they received occasional visits from their Bishop, but knew little of any common Church life or Diocese organization. Each was left to deal with its own difficulties, to make its own experiments, and take its own counsels without any knowledge of how similar needs were being met in other fields. For, needless to say if neighbouring Anglican Missions were thus ignorant of one another, the contact with those of other Churches was still more haphazard and infrequent. When the Dornakal Diocese was divided off from the Madras Diocese nineteen years ago, though the area was still large and its numbers rapidly increasing, yet it formed a manageable sphere and one of homogeneous interests and problems. At once it began to realize the value and inspiration of a common diocesan life. There has

been a gradual and healthy process of assimilation in matters doctrinal and liturgical, as well as a merging of resource for much useful work. Members of different schools of thought in the Church have learnt to respect and love one another. Close contact has been established by Diocesan Councils, and Committees, by Clergy Conferences, Teachers' Study Schools, Retreats, a Common Diocesan Theological College and in many other ways. The first obvious result of the Scheme of Union will be that the Dornakal Diocese will again be broken up. The C.M.S. Mission area lies entirely in the Kistna and Godavary Districts on the East side of India, and the Dornakal area in which the Indian Missionary Society in Tinnevelly is working, together with its daughter Mission, is contiguous with it. These together number some 130,000 adherents. Their nearest neighbour among the Churches negotiating for union is the Wesleyan Methodist Church of the Deccan. To secure the purpose of the Joint Committee that, as far as possible in every newly-formed Diocese, there should be a mingling of two or more Churches, it seems likely that an Eastern Telugu Diocese would include together with the C.M.S. and the I.M.S.T. areas some portion of the Wesleyan area.

The S.P.G. area in the Kurnool and Cuddapah Districts is not only contiguous with that in which the London Mission is working, but in many parts overlaps it. Except in the larger towns of Jammalamadugu, Nandyal, and Cuddapah, there are probably no places where both Churches have congregations. Comity agreements for many years past have happily been able to secure this. But the congregations of the two Churches are almost everywhere in close proximity. They are drawn very largely from the same Mala community. There has been a good deal of intermarriage between them, and in many ways there is close intercourse. But with all this, there is the separation in spiritual fellowship and in growing Christian tradition which our divided Churches and Missions have brought with them. There is isolation of worship, discipline and church life.

What do we in the Anglican Church look for as compensation for the separation of ourselves conciliarly from the larger section of our Telugu Church? Surely, we may hope for an even more intimate process of 'growing together' than that which has been described above. It is undoubted that a new Diocese will include at least all the S.P.G. and London Mission Congregations in the Kurnool and Cuddapah Districts. Can anyone contemplate the consummation of such a Union, even if he is not episcopally inclined, without some emotion and grateful lifting up of the heart to God? It will mean the breaking down of many barriers of aloofness and suspicion and prejudice, the setting free of new forces for the winning of the Telugu country for Christ and the widening and deepening of that fellowship by which we draw ever nearer to the Spirit of Christ. But we have to consider that which will come before the

consummation. The Joint Committee has dealt, I believe, in a masterly manner with the process by which the new Dioceses will be gradually formed and the transition from the old councils to the new will be accomplished. The scheme gives five years for such a process and transition. But this is a matter of constitution and organization. What of the 'growing together' in things of the Spirit? Already there are signs of a close life. For two or three years past in Jammalamadugu, S.P.G. and L.M.S. teachers and pastors have come together for their annual Conference. There in occasional interchange of pulpits and participation in worship. Students join the schools or training institutions of the neighbouring mission, and for a time find their spiritual home therein. But, with all this, there is a certain constraint of freedom and even an irritating limitation upon the conscience. We come together for summer school or conference and join in prayer and praise, but part without having joined in the central act of Christian worship. An S.P.G. teacher finds employment in a London Mission School and must either cut himself off from his own communion, or else stand outside the Church activities and membership of the body for which he is now working. It is often a hard decision to make, and it is not a decision with which an Indian Christian ought to be faced. The act of union will bring with it the joyful casting-off of these limitations and casuistical difficulties, not perhaps altogether and all at once. There will still be the transition period before 'the complete spiritual unity' of which the Scheme speaks, is reached, 'till all the members of the united Church are willing and wishful to receive communion equally in all of its Churches'. It is a fairly safe prophecy to make that in our Anglican area there will be few indeed who will not be ready and thankful to use opportunities for such communion and for sharing in the common life and worship of the United Church. But we cannot take it for granted that all will at once adjust themselves to new conditions and fully accept unaccustomed sacraments and rites. It is with this in view that the pledge is made in the Scheme 'that no arrangements with regard to churches, congregations, or ministers will knowingly be made, either generally or in particular cases, which would offend the conscientious convictions of any persons directly concerned, or which would hinder the development of complete unity with the Church or imperil its subsequent progress towards union with other Churches'. This will act (among other purposes) as a charter for the individual conscience, and will prevent any sudden change being made which might force a man into a position of protest and peculiarity which he would be the last to desire. It will ordinarily ensure that the disposition of Parishes and Pastorates will continue as at present at any rate for a few years to come.

If we are asked what we are looking for beyond this fellowship in worship, and discipline and organization, we say that we hope to receive, as

we may also be priveleged under God's hand to give, a great deal. We look to our brothers of the Free Churches to give us a fresh (not a new) message about God, to open up to us wider visions of devotional life and approach to divine things, a freer and more tolerant attitude towards God's dealings with the Church, and greater opportunities of common service to God and witness for Him.

P. B. EMMET.

Book Reviews

Worshipping Toward Christian Unity by John B. Cowden. (Christian Unity Evangelism, West Nashville, Tenn.)

This book is a study and exposition of the devotional approach to Christian Unity. A great deal has been said concerning Church Unity in the last few years, but we do not know of any other approach to the subject from this angle. Those who have engaged in this movement in South India, realized that it was the devotional periods spent at the Joint Committee Meeting that really brought the members of that Committee close together. It is not when we are discussing denominational differences of Church polity or of creed that we feel the presence of the spirit of God, but when we kneel together at the foot of the Cross that unity at once becomes dominant. Mr. Cowden has prepared this book on that theory and has given place in the book to a great deal of valuable matter along that line.

The Religion of Man by Rabindranath Tagore. (George Allen & Unwin Ltd., London. *7s. 6d.* net.)

Dr. Tagore has published in this book the lectures he delivered in Oxford University as the Hibbert lectures of 1930. In this volume, Dr. Tagore sets forth his theory concerning man and his religion and as a study of Tagore's own psychology and theories, it is most interesting. He seems to find in the mind of the superman or the universal man something of divinity. How this can fully satisfy him we do not know, for, unless that Universal Man is a personality whom we call God, the idea does not seem to satisfy. That the Supreme Being and men are closely linked together in the quality of their mind and spirit, is no doubt true.

There are four appendices in the book one of which is a conversation between Einstein and Tagore. These two minds do not seem to have been able to get close together and Einstein seems to have been especially dissatisfied with Dr. Tagore's setting forth of his theory and could not find in the universal human mind the objective whom he could call God nor could he accept Dr. Tagore's statement that truth did not exist except in the individual or universal mind. Dr. Einstein contended that truth exists objectiveiy which Dr. Tagore did not seem to accept.

Adventures in Money-Raising by Cornelius Martin Steffens (Macmillan Company, New York. $2·50.)

This volume is an intensely practical book intended for those who are planning to raise considerable sums of money for an institution, or for those who are interested in various phases of American social problems. Dr. Steffens did a wonderful piece of work in building up the University of Dubuque through the raising of large sums of money and in this book he, together with Paul P. Faris, has shown how this work was done and has laid down certain practical principles for those who try to do a similar work. The book is about the only one of its kind in existence and certainly will be of great value to many missionaries who desire to raise money for their work.

Clippings

The Dutch Church and the Lambeth Conference

[The Rev. W. P. G. Schierhout has kindly sent us this translation of an article in the Kerkbode.—(Editor of *The Church Chronicle* of S. Africa)]

At the invitation of Rev. A. M. McGregor, of Three Anchor Bay, a number of the clergy of our Church met the Bishop of Bloemfontein in the church of the said congregation to ascertain some of his impressions of the Lambeth Conference of Bishops of the Anglican Church throughout the world. 306 from all parts of the world and from different nationalities took part in the Conference, and among these men, especially from the Eastern nationalities, were several who had to their credit a specially honourable and self-sacrificing career. There is, of course, inspiration in numbers, but Dr. Carey, the Bishop of Bloemfontein, found that to do work the great number was a hindrance. The list of speakers was sometimes so lengthy that, when the turn of a speaker came, what gave rise to his address was perhaps forgotten.

The resolution on birth control includes a veiled approval under certain circumstances of means for prevention of child birth. On this subject there was great difference of opinion in the Conference, and the S.A. Bishops voted against the accepted motion. It turned out that a considerably large number (67) voted against, 40 refrained from voting, and 140 voted in favour of the accepted resolution. This resolution was taken under the impression of the many hard cases which under present day circumstances occur in married life. And certainly too, consciously or unconsciously, the present strongly prevailing view of life—that people have a claim on life's happiness [lewensgeluk]—influenced the meeting. In the previous century the obligation of submission to the demands of God's Word and to the Christian moral law held sway over souls much more powerfully than in our days. Formerly it was enough if God's Word had spoken; however hard it might be, society submitted to it, outwardly at least. But in the new era, in which since the war we are living, another standard is used.

Dr. Carey got the impression that this new view of life has increased disquietingly in England—under the influence too of popular novelists. He has returned to South Africa with the deep conviction of the necessity that in our preaching we should insist upon a complete surrender of body, soul and spirit to Christ. Therein alone is safety in a time when everything is set with loose screws [i.e., 'sits lightly upon people']. And in order to be goalconscious [i.e., 'to have a definite object'] and fruitful, he feels that the Christian armies, which up to the present are so pitifully divided, must join together [i.e., 'close up their ranks']. Matters of lesser import must not stand in the way of co-operation between people who profess to love and serve Christ. Love for Christ is the all-deciding urge and test; thereby what is of the earth earthly is condemned and pushed out. Love for Christ casts out race hatred and the other ugly feelings which open the door to want of forbearance and to war. If a person really loves the Lord Jesus, he cannot hate or despise his fellowmen whatever his colour or race may be.

Another matter concerning which other Churches very much liked to ascertain the expression of opinion of the Lambeth Conference was its view of the attitude of the Episcopal Church towards the other so-called Free Churches which reject the doctrine of the Apostolic Succession and deny the necessity of the Episcopal ordination to the Christian Ministry. This view of the indispensability of the Episcopal ordination to the Christian Ministry has hitherto been the stumbling block in the way of rapprochement between the Anglican and Free Churches. The former Lambeth Conference, held ten years ago, made a pronouncement on this matter, which showed a gladdening irenic spirit and fostered the hope that at last a bridge could be built between the two portions of the Christian Church. Acting in the spirit of that pronouncement, the Churches which are doing Missionary work in South India have during the last years conferred with one another in order to see whether an end could not be made of the mutual divided condition of the Christian forces in the face of the overwhelming heathenism. The negotiations advanced prosperously under God's good hand—so prosperously indeed that an agreement has been reached between the Anglican, Presbyterian, Wesleyan, and Congregational whereby all these shall act as one Church under the name of the United Church of South India. This arrangement, to which of course the approval of the Anglo-Catholic Section of the Anglican Church could not possibly be expected, has nevertheless been approved by the Lambeth Conference. In this we must not, alas! discover the conversion of the extreme ritualistic party in the English Church. On the contrary, this agreement was probably reached by a tactical or strategic understanding, from which the one or other party hope to reap later on its own advantage. So at least some of the lookers-on are of opinion. But in any case a great change has come about in the Anglican Church throughout the world, but especially in South Africa, on the point of the doctrine of the Apostolic

Succession. There is now no longer so much talk about the *Apostolic* Episcopate as about the *Historic* Episcopate, that is to say, the brethren of the English Church are no longer so keenly out to trace back their ordination by an unbroken chain to the Apostles, as rather to point to the fact that the Divine Providence during the centuries—from the 2nd to the 16th century—let the government of the Christian Church take place universally by means of Bishops. Notice must surely be taken of this, they say, as a revelation of the will of God's Spirit Who leads the Church in all the truth. Must we not, so they ask, see in this the intimation of the will of God with regard to His Church?

Our readers will immediately see the great difference between this standpoint and that of former years—then there was a difference in principle between Anglicans and non-Anglicans, now it is one of method. And the question, as to whether the rule and administration of the Church may not be benefited by an element of episcopal supervision therein, can certainly be fruitfully debated. In any case we welcome the better attitude of our brethren of the Anglican Church towards the Free Churches, and we heartily identify ourselves with the utterance of the Bishop of Bloemfontein—that where the love for the Lord Jesus fills the heart, then there is no room for racial hate or contempt.

Christian Reunion: Hopes and Risks

(An Address delivered at the Church Congress in 1930)

By Rev. J. P. S. R. GIBSON, M.A.,

Principal of Ridley Hall, Cambridge.

The subject of this paper is the application of the principles of reunion to the South Indian problem. It is well, therefore, to have the facts before us in a nutshell.

The Basis of Union is the faith in Jesus Christ, the revelation of the Triune God.

The Holy Scriptures and the Apostles' and Nicene Creeds are accepted, as also the Sacraments of Baptism and the Supper of the Lord.

The historic episcopate in constitutional form is accepted without implying any theory concerning episcopacy.

All ordinations after the act of union will be by Bishops. In the inaugural service of consecrations, presbyters are to take part, and the Lambeth Committee (Report, page 129) does not exclude their sharing in ordinations later.

No reordination will be required, and during an interim period of thirty years, non-episcopally ordained ministers will be full ministers of the United Churches. After thirty years the question of exceptions to the general principle of an episcopally ordained ministry will be considered.

The question has been freely discussed in the Press from all points of view and it would be sheer repetition to enter into a discussion of the many details of this epoch-marking scheme. This paper therefore proposes to place just one or two of the main issues before the Congress lest the deceitful comfort of shirking or the vain hope of compromise entice us into a false expectation of reaching conclusions greater than the premises.

I

As the 1930 Lambeth Report on Unity points out, the only outstanding difficulty is that of Order. An episcopal Church and non-episcopal Churches seek to join and pool their heritage in order to create a Church that will be the richer for the union. What, then, is the religious experience that these two Churches have to share? The Anglicans have tested and enjoyed episcopacy for long ages. Under it they have developed as a Church and been guided by the Spirit into world-wide extension. Naturally, they hold to this heritage with tenacity. They have proved episcopacy to be a means by which the Church may grow and fulfil the place Christ claims for it in world redemption. In addition, they find that this form of Church life has existed from very early days and is the form accepted by the Roman and Orthodox Churches as well as by other smaller Churches. Episcopacy is persistent and it is wide-spread.

Anglicans feel, therefore, that they have a right to claim that this heritage should be part of the United Church in South India, and that the Church should be governed under a constitutional episcopate.

Can the Free Churches concerned accept this claim? Their leaders in South India have done so and the following are some of the reasons that can be given. There is nothing against the Spirit of Christ in such a form of government and such arrangement for ordination of ministers.

Whatever be the form of Church government adopted by the Free Churches, there has always been a trend towards centralized government, and in many cases the difference between a Superintendent and a Bishop is only a matter of name and method of appointment. Even the most democratic and individualistic of the Churches, the Congregational, has lately seen the wisdom of appointing provincial overseers.

Thus the way has been prepared for such a step within their own organization.

Then, if the character of the South Indian peoples is considered it is found that they naturally take to a centralized government of the paternal type. It is in accord with their own internal political instincts. All these reasons may seem logical and simple to us, but to men brought up in hereditary distrust of episcopal rule, it means a real sacrifice. We must realize what a great step such acceptance means for them. It is a truly great thing for these men to accept for the cause of organic unity a system which their forefathers rejected.

We turn now to the religious experience of the non-episcopalians. For centuries they have been blessed of God in personal sanctity and in corporate expansion. Their sacraments have brought to their adherents and to the Anglican clergy and laity who have been privileged to partake with them[1] the same blessings that ours have brought us. These Free Churches have developed into world-wide Churches. In spiritual power and worldly expansion God has blessed them as He has blessed us. The Bishops at Lambeth have recognized these facts, and in 1930 repeat the statement of 1920 that 'these ministries have been manifestly blessed and owned by the Holy Spirit as effective means of grace'. They rightly refuse to make common what God hath cleansed.

All this has been achieved without episcopacy. What we have been with it, they have been without it. The only conclusion that some would draw from this experience is that the presbyter is as essential to the Church as the Bishop and must therefore be included in the ministry of the United Church. But this is not the logical conclusion from the data. What the Free Churches have proved in these centuries of their development is that episcopacy is not an essential to the existence and the progressive life of a Church.

This truth, known in the early days of the Church, spasmodically remembered from time to time by ourselves, is what they may rightly consider as their spiritual rediscovery, which must be handed on to the United Church as it starts on its career of a constitutional episcopate.

The problem before us is whether we as Anglicans can freely accept this truth which the guidance of the Spirit has led them to discover.

One is conscious of a natural tendency to think that what has proved beneficial is essential. We have known episcopacy as good for us and for certain others, and we are tempted to conclude it is essential, not only for our Church, but for the Church Universal.

This conclusion cannot be drawn from our experience. Necessity is not the same as efficacy. The general cannot be deduced from the particular. Essentiality for all cannot be drawn from beneficiality to many.

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To sum up: it is necessary to be quite clear on the points of religious experience which the past entitled these two Churches to maintain as their heritage to be conveyed to the South Indian Church. The Anglicans have a right to insist on the Church being episcopal. The Free Churchman has a right to insist on the clearest possible mutual understanding that they accept this form because the circumstances of South India in 1930 are to them a guidance of the Spirit to do so, and not because they see in episcopacy anything vital to the life of a Church. Only on such a basis can a true union be formed. If these points are shirked or settled by a compromise of double *entente*, there can emerge nothing except a formal juxtaposition of essentially differents. We ardently desire for South India something richer than the union we call the Anglican communion. We desire for them that after which we are striving here and which by God's blessing and our receptivity we can reach. Only in this spirit of a true spiritual union over and above all formal union, and based on love and trust, can the Church, whether in England or in South India, become potent to win a over massed secularism and the non-Christian faiths of sundry peoples.

II

The interim period seems to many to be a matter of serious concern. But is not this time the God-given opportunity for accomplishing two ends? First, the gradual passing away of many of those in whose hearts the antagonism to episcopacy is deep-seated and who have yet made the supreme effort of associating themselves with an episcopal ministry. The new conditions will not make for the birth or survival of this prejudice. The new generation will not hate Pharaoh! Secondly, during this time we Anglicans, while firmly holding to the benefits of our traditional order, will have given ample evidence that we realize that a Church does not depend upon order, but that order grows out of the needs of the Church. To view the interim period as an unavoidable evil during which anomalies will be subjugated is to misunderstand it entirely. It is a priceless period for the free sharing and appreciating of the respective contributions of the Churches before they become one Church. The fruits which we see in other Churches at the present time, we shall again see developed before our eyes and learn to rejoice in the variety of God's methods even as they in the benefits of a particular one. Viewed in this light, I see the interim period as the balm of Gilead that will soothe the sorely wounded

[1] The great intercommunion on Easter Day, 1928, at Jerusalem, when a Methodist Bishop celebrated, is one instance among many. Such experiences confirm my profound conviction that the view held by many, including Anglican Bishops, is correct, namely, that intercommunion is a means to reunion and not only its goal.

hearts of prejudice on both sides. It will also be the cement that binds together the hearts and minds and wills of all whose chief interest is in the victories to be won and not the battles of the past, and who believe in the Holy Spirit as the living Power that makes tradition and not merely maintains it.

The question of a break in succession is not in question in the South Indian Scheme, but the matter is so closely related that I cannot forbear to share a thought upon it with you.

Mere succession can never lead out of itself to something absolutely distinct and greater. I am no scientist, but as I read the latest thought on this subject I find that in the physical universe the most momentous changes occur by jumps and not by gradual development. As one examines the various grades of life as outlined in such a book as 'Christus Veritas', by the Archbishop of York, one realises that the states are distinct, but the blending of one into the other hard to trace. Perhaps the missing link has not been found because he is not there. God 'breathed into his nostrils the breath of life and man became a living soul'. I see the same lesson in the Incarnation, death, and resurrection of our Lord. He did not show His divine nature by a succession of days of life, but by His death, leading to His appearance in a new form of life.

III

So is it with the ministry. Its ultimate sanction must lie, not in any unbroken succession, be it of form or of the Spirit, but in its power of resurrection whenever it is broken. Unchangeableness of form is not a manifestation of the Spirit. Where the Spirit is, there is life, and where life is, there is change and death and after three days the rising again. The centre of hope in the South Indian Scheme lies in Section IV (B). This marks a new attitude, not only in the history of the evolution of the scheme over twenty years, but in the relation of separated Churches everywhere. Right up to and including the Lausanne Conference, members of different Churches were seeking an accepted, codified, tabulated minimum of agreement. The central thought was to guard an old experience. As yet the glorious revelation of new experiences to be gained by mutual sharing had not burst upon the Churches. Lausanne marks the highest point of the watershed. All that rigid love and generosity could do was done, but the flexibility of the Spirit was unguessed. Then came the Jerusalem Conference, that mighty epoch in Church life, that modern Pentecost, opening the flood-gates of the Spirit and rendering the minds and hearts of men receptive to the workings of the Christ in divers manners in divers places. There in discussion men learned to appreciate rather than criticise, there in fellowship of worship they were drawn together and, finally, in the act of which they communed with the living Christ in Holy Sacrament, they pledged themselves once again to Christ's way of victory which is the way of sacrifice and surrender. There they learned to give, not grasp, to trust, not protect. The Spirit of that Conference passed over to South India. It permeated the final Conference that produced the report. It broke down the spirit that saw men fighting for a principle and then nullifying it in practice by conditions. Listen to the paragraphs. It is equally the intention of the uniting Churches that the united Church shall in its legislation and executive acts respect the conscientious convictions of its ministers and members. It will in these matters avoid on the one hand any encouragement of licence or condonation of breaches of Church unity and fellowship and on the other hand any unchristian rigidity in its regulations or in their application; and in all its functions it will seek the preservation of unity within, the attainment of wider union, and the avoidance of immediate contests on particular cases.

They recognize that the act of union will initiate a process of growing together into one life and of advance towards that complete spiritual unity. If during this process difficulties and anomalies arise, the united Church will be careful not to allow any overriding of conscience by Church authorities or by majorities; nor will it in its administrative acts knowingly transgress the long-established traditions of any of the uniting Churches.

They believe that these ends can rightly be attained, not by the framing of detailed regulations, but by assurances given and received in a spirit of mutual confidence and love. They therefore pledge themselves and fully trust each other that in the united Church no arrangements with regard to Churches, congregations, or ministers will knowingly be made, either generally or in particular cases, which would offend the conscientious convictions of any persons directly concerned, or which would hinder the development of complete unity within the Church or imperil its subsequent progress towards union with other Churches.

We are upon the mountain top of light and love and of that freedom which recognizes that man is corporate. The exhilaration of the summit replaces the heaviness of the visionless plain.

Such ideals will not be easy to express, but to have sensed them, to have written them, and to have given them to the world is an achievement full of promise of the great things to come.

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A glorious, God-inspired adventure lies before them and the issue is not uncertain. 'My word,' saith the Lord, 'shall not return unto me void. It shall accomplish that which I please and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it.'

The Primate, Presbyterians, and the 'Church Times'

(From The British Weekly)

Our friend the Rev. A. Herbert Gray, D.D., sends the following correspondence :—

DEAR LORD ARCHBISHOP,—On the first Sunday of May this year, our mutual friend the Rev. H. R. L. Sheppard, lately Dean of Canterbury, came and joined in the celebration of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper in my church. Commencing on this action, the *Church Times* prints the following sentence :—

'Since it may be conjectured that none of the parties to this rite considered it to be more than a love-feast, or to involve any consecration, the actual harm done may be slight, but the scandal is serious.'

I at once wrote to the *Church Times* to correct them on a plain matter of fact, it being the case that all the parties to this rite considered it to be more than a love-feast, and that we Presbyterians regard our Sacraments as Sacraments in the fullest sense of the word.

It is true that the *Church Times* is not the official organ of the Church of England, but it represents influential views, and I should be very glad to know from you whether this view of our Sacrament as being merely a love-feast is to be taken as the view of the Church of England. It is certainly very different from the statement which you with other bishops endorsed that such Sacraments were to be regarded as 'real Sacraments of Christ within the universal Church.'

If you are not able to repudiate the suggestion of the *Church Times* and to dissociate your Church from such an attitude, many cannot but wonder of what use further conversations with a view to union can be.

It may interest you to see the actual words of our standards regarding the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper. We regard the Sacrament as Christ's own Sacrament of His Body and Blood given for us, and our standards state that these realities 'are as really yet spiritually present to the faith of believers as the elements themselves are to their outward sense'.

I propose to send this letter and your Grace's reply to the Press.—Yours sincerely,

A. HERBERT GRAY.

14, HASLEMERE-ROAD, LONDON, N. 8.

DEAR DR. GRAY,—I have received your letter of May 22, and I regret that the pressure of work has prevented me from writing sooner.

In reply to your letter it is, I think, enough for me to say :—

1. That the words which you quote from the *Church Times* are, of course, simply an expression of the opinion of the writer, as the *Church Times* is in no sense an official organ of the Church of England.

2. That knowing as I do the doctrine of the Sacrament of Holy Communion set forth in the standards of the Presbyterian Church, I entirely dissociate myself from any words implying that the Presbyterian rite can be regarded merely as a 'love-feast', which does not 'involve any consecration', or that such a description of the Presbyterian rite can be accepted as the view of the Church of England.—Yours sincerely,

COSMO CANTUAR.

OLD PALACE, LAMBETH,

May 28, 1931.

The Resumption of Reunion Negotiations

(From The Christian World)

We welcome very heartily the resumption of negotiations between representatives of the Church of England and of the Free Churches with regard to 'Reunion'. We shall say nothing at the moment except this. First, we profoundly hope that this new beginning will have a more auspicious and seemly conclusion. Further, the whole prospect of Reunion will in our view have come a real step nearer when one day we see a deputation from the Episcopate being received in the Supreme Courts of the various Free Churches in the land, pleading the great cause; and, following upon that, a deputation representing the Free Churches in Supreme Court appearing with the same high intention before some corresponding court of the Church of England.

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